127. Formation of Committees for the efficient management of Devaswoms.

Mr. K. M. Thandavamurtin Pillai (Member, Tovala taluk) spoke of the desirability of associating the people in the administration of the Devaswoms in the State. In Nanjinad, many of the Devaswoms came into existence through the munificence of the religiously minded people of the locality and, in several instances, large endowments had been made by the founders. Early records showed that, before the year 987 M. E. when the Government assumed the management of private Devaswoms, those institutions were looked after by the people in the best possible manner. Whatever the justification for bringing them under the State management at the time, it could not be said with any degree of certainty that the object of the endowments had been fulfilled or that the whole income derived from the endowments was being spent for the purposes for which the endowments had been made. The Member said that the annual income from the Devaswom properties in 1048 as given in the Administration Report for that year should have increased several-fold in later years. A large income was also received from several Devaswoms under the head of 'offerings'. The people had an interest in seeing whether the income from Devaswoms was used for their benefit. At present, the responsibility in such matters rested with the Revenue Department. The Tahsildar, who was the head of the Revenue Department in a taluk, had little or no time to look to the proper conduct of the affairs of the Devaswoms in his taluk owing to his multifarious duties in connection with the revenue and magisterial work. The low-paid subordinates who were in immediate charge of the Devaswoms did as they liked and their actions were not scrutinised by the higher authorities. As a result, the affairs of many Devaswoms were being grossly mismanaged. That state of things would not have come to exist, if the people of the locality had a voice in the matter and were entrusted with the management of the Devaswoms as in British India and other places. Such an arrangement might also prove to be the training ground to the people in the management of local affairs. The Tahsildars when divested of Devaswom work would be able to devote greater attention to their revenue and magisterial duties. The Member, therefore, suggested the formation of a Committee in each locality in Nanjinad for the management of the affairs of the Devaswoms therein, or at least for the supervision of the conduct of their affairs. The members of the Committee should be selected for a fixed term from among the leading men of the locality. The Committee should be given full powers of administration in respect of the Devaswoms, subject to the control of the Government.

Dewan's reply.—Noted.

IX. MISCELLANEOUS.—(*Concluded*).

128. Relief of distress.

Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum taluk) said that there was wide-spread distress in the land and that the relief measures adopted had not gone sufficiently far to help the people from getting over their misery. He then objected to the order of Government prohibiting the transport of paddy from one Division to another in the State, as such an order was against the principles of political economy. The order had already created great confusion among the people, especially in South Travancore where it had affected the ryots considerably. It was the merchants who were benefited. The Member was of opinion that, as far as possible, all restrictive laws should be dispensed with. The Member then submitted that the problem of supply of food stuffs was a serious one and that the Government had to look ahead in such matters and provide for all facilities being given to increase the output of the lands. Large numbers of School Final men were being turned out every year and they were wandering in quest of appointments. It would not be possible for Government to provide for all of them. As a remedy for all the economic ills the country was suffering from, the Member suggested the introduction of technical and industrial education. Industries like weaving should be encouraged. More money should be provided for better work being turned out by the Agricultural Department. The Agricultural Improvement Loans Regulation should be so amended and worked as to enable the poor ryots to fully avail themselves of its provisions. The annual

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